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527 CMR: BOARD OF FIRE PREVENTION REGULATIONS

527 CMR 21.00: DECORATIONS, CURTAINS, DRAPERIES, BLINDS AND OTHER WINDOW TREATMENTS

Section

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21.01: Definitions

For the purpose of 527 CMR 21.00 the following words shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them:

Approved: Unless otherwise indicated, listed or approved by a nationally recognized testing laboratory (NRTL).

Blind: Anything that keeps out light when placed in a window but not including ordinary window shades. Included are venetian blinds, vertical blinds and other synthetic materials.

Curtain: A piece of cloth or other material, sometimes arranged so that it can be drawn upward or sideways, hung for decoration, as at a window, or to cover, conceal, or shut off something.

Decorations: All materials such as scenery, plastic shields, streamers, and also cloth, cotton batting, straw, vines, leaves, trees and moss used for decorative effect, bamboo and other wood fibers, cardboard and other paper products.

Drapery: Hangings or coverings arranged in loose folds or an artistic arrangement of such hangings or coverings.

Enclosed Spaces: Those spaces within an occupancy that are completely separated from public spaces by a "smoke barrier." Included are hotel rooms, individual apartments, and enclosed offices.

Flammable Decoration: Any decoration as defined in 527 CMR 21.01(1) shall be classified as a flammable decoration if it exhibits an afterflame greater than two seconds or an afterglow greater than 40 seconds when tested according to the methods described in 527 CMR 21.03(1) through (4).

NR: No Requirement.

Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL): An organization which tests for safety and lists, labels or accepts equipment or materials and which meets the criteria in 527 CMR 49.00 (Appendix C).

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Public Spaces: Those spaces within an occupancy accessible by the public while the building is occupied. This shall include all components of the means of egress such as exit accesses and exits.

Smoke Barrier: A continuous membrane, either vertical or horizontal, such as a wall, floor, or ceiling assembly and solid opening protection such as solid doors and windows, that is designed and constructed to restrict the spread of smoke. A smoke barrier may or may not have a fire resistance rating. Opening protective devices (doors for example) shall be self- or automatic-closing.

21.02: General Requirements

(1) Materials regulated by 527 CMR 21.00 shall not be purchased, leased or rented for use in a particular occupancy unless the intended user has been provided with certification from an approved fire test laboratory that the regulated material conforms with the applicable provisions of 527 CMR 21.00.

(2) The head of the fire department shall be provided with a copy of the certification required by 527 CMR 21.02(1) and a notice that fire test reports and related documentation which demonstrate the certified compliance are available on request.

(3) Where a topical flame retardant finish, not of a permanent nature, is applied to a decoration, curtains, draperies, etc., a certificate of such treatment and a sample of the treated decoration, curtains, draperies, etc. shall be filed with the head of the fire department. The certificate shall be renewed whenever the decoration, curtains, draperies, etc. are laundered or dry-cleaned.

(4) Additions or modifications to existing decorations, curtains, draperies, etc. using approved materials may be made without bringing the remaining decorations, curtains, draperies, etc. into conformance with 527 CMR 21.00.

(5) 527 CMR 21.00 shall apply to occupancies in accordance with Table 1 and Table 2. Where indicated in Table 1 by the word "Yes," only decorations that are not classified as "flammable decorations" or that have passed the applicable test(s) described in NFPA 701 shall be allowed. Where indicated in Table 2, the curtains, draperies, blinds and other window treatments shall pass the referenced test method(s). Occupancies are defined by 780 CMR.

(6) **Special Seasonal Decorations:** When it can be shown to the head of the fire department that generic materials such as cardboard, paper or textiles can meet the requirements of 527 CMR 21.00 when treated with a flame-retardant process, those specific generic materials shall not be required to have a specific testing and certification.

The end user shall apply for a permit from the head of the fire department for the use of Special Seasonal Decorations. A certification shall be provided that the Special Seasonal Decorations have been treated with a flame-retardant process which will render generic materials being used as Special Seasonal Decorations so that they will be in compliance with 527 CMR 21.00.

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Documentation shall be made available to the head of the fire department which shall demonstrate compliance with 527 CMR 21.00.

(7) No materials regulated by 527 CMR 21.00 shall be so placed as to obstruct exits, access thereto, egress therefrom, or visibility thereof.

21.03: Test Method for Decorations

(1) Six specimens, each measuring 1½ inches by ten inches shall be cut at random from the submitted sample when feasible.

(2) Each specimen shall be suspended vertically for ten seconds with its lower end in contact with the top of the flame of a Tirrell burner which has been adjusted so that the blue cone of the flame is approximately 1½ inches high and the total height of the flame is six inches.

(3) After removal of the flame from the specimen its afterflame and afterglow shall be observed.

(4) If a portion of the specimen melts off during exposure to the test of flame, the burner shall be raised so as to maintain contact between the flame and specimen for a total time of ten seconds. The duration of burning of the melted off portion of the specimen shall be noted and considered to be afterflame in any evaluation of the flammability of the specimen.

(5) An alternative method of compliance is to pass the applicable test(s) described in NFPA 701.

21.04: Test Method for Curtains, Draperies, Blinds, and Other Window Treatments

(1) The test methods employed shall be those specified NFPA 701.

(2) The tested items shall be conditioned prior to testing as specified in the referenced test method.

TABLE I
DECORATIONS
APPROVAL REQUIRED UNDER 527 CMR 21.00

<u>Occupancy</u>	<u>Decorations Test or NFPA 701</u>
A - Assembly (all sub-groups)	
public space	Yes
enclosed space	Yes
B - Business	
public space	Yes
enclosed space	NR

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E - Educational	
public space	Yes
enclosed space	Yes
F - Factory and Industrial	NR
H - High Hazard	NR
I - Institutional (all sub-groups)	
public space	Yes
enclosed space	Yes
M - Mercantile	
public space	Yes
enclosed space	NR
R - Residential, R-1	
public space	Yes
enclosed space	Yes
- Residential, R-2	
public space	Yes
enclosed space	NR
- Residential, R-3 and R-4	
public space	Not Applicable
enclosed space	NR
- Residential, R-5	
public space	Not Applicable
enclosed space	Yes
S - Storage	NR
U - Utility and Miscellaneous	NR

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21.04: continued

TABLE 2
CURTAINS, DRAPERIES, ETC.
APPROVAL REQUIRED UNDER 527 CMR 21.00

<u>Occupancy</u>	<u>Test Method</u>
A - Assembly, A - 1	
public space	NFPA 701
enclosed space	NFPA 701
- Assembly, A - 2	
public space	NFPA 701
enclosed space	NFPA 701
- Assembly, A - 3	NFPA 701
- Assembly, A - 4	NFPA 701
- Assembly, A - 5	NFPA 701
B - Business	
public space	NFPA 701
enclosed space	NR
E - Educational	
public space	NFPA 701
enclosed space	NFPA 701
F - Factory and Industrial	NR
H - High Hazard	NR
I - Institutional (all sub-groups)	
public space	NFPA 701
enclosed space	NFPA 701
M - Mercantile	
public space	NFPA 701
enclosed space	NR
R - Residential, R-1	
public space	NFPA 701
enclosed space	NFPA 701
- Residential, R-2	
public space	NFPA 701
enclosed space	NR
- Residential, R-3 and R-4	
public space	Not Applicable
enclosed space	NR
- Residential, R-5	
public space	Not Applicable
enclosed space	NFPA 701
S - Storage	NR
U - Utility and Miscellaneous	NR

Note: Tentage 120 sq. ft. or less shall comply with 527 CMR 19.00 and tentage greater than 120 sq. ft. shall comply with 780 CMR.

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21.05: Referenced Publications

Documents or portions thereof that are referenced within 527 CMR 21.00 shall be considered a part of the requirements of 527 CMR 21.00. Refer to 527 CMR 49.00 for a complete listing of all documents referenced in 527 CMR.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

527 CMR 21.00: M.G.L. c. 148, §§ 10 and 28.